

of the old Adam—" profit being the chief aim and not the propagation of religion "—and Governor Bradford, observing uneasily how men grew " in their outward estates/' remarked that the increase in material prosperity "will be the ruin of New England, at least of the Churches of God there/' ⁸¹ Sometimes Providence smote the exploiter. The immigrant who organized the first American Trust—he owned the only milch cow on board and sold the milk at *zd.* a quart—" being after at a sermon wherein oppression was complained of * . . fell distracted/' ⁸¹ Those who escaped the judgment of Heaven had to face the civil authorities and the Church, which, in the infancy of the colony, were the same thing.

Naturally the authorities regulated prices, limited the rate of interest, fixed a maximum wage, and whipped incorrigible idlers ; for these things had been done even in the house of bondage from which they fled. What was more distinctive of the children of light was their attempt to apply the same wholesome discipline to the elusive category of business profits. The price of cattle, the Massachusetts authorities decreed, was to be determined, not by the needs of the buyer, but so as to yield no more than a reasonable return to the seller,⁸⁷ Against those who charged more, their wrath was that of Moses descending to find the chosen

people worshipping a golden calf. What
little emotion
they had to spare from their rage against
religious
freedom, they turned against economic
license. Roger
Williams touched a real affinity when, in
his moving
plea for tolerance, he argued that, though
extortion was
an evil, it was an evil the treatment of
which should
be left to the discretion of the civil
authorities.⁸⁸

Consider the case of Mr. Robert Keane.
His offence,
by general consent, was black. He kept a
shop in
Boston, in which he took " in some . . .
above 6d. in
the shilling profit; in some above &rf.; and
in some
small things above two for one " f and this,
though he